

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CU-04 DHA-02

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /098 W

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R 230825Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8526

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USMISSION USUN NW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 PRETORIA 4279

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SF

SUBJECT: MIXED SPORT LEADS TO ROW IN NATIONAL PARTY

1. SUMMARY: A STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF SPORT PIET KOORNHOF THAT MIXED-RACE SPORTS TEAMS ARE NOT ILLEGAL IN SOUTH AFRICA SPARKED A PUBLIC ROW IN THE NATIONAL PARTY. WHILE NOT SPECIFICALLY CITING KOORNHOF, A NUMBER OF LEADING NATIONALISTS, INCLUDING ANDRIES TREURNICHT AND CONNIE MULDER, RESPONDED BY VOICING STRONG OPPOSITION TO MIXED TEAMS AS CONTRARY TO GOVERNMENT POLICY. FOLLOWING A WEEK OF MOUNTING CONTROVERSY AND PRESSURE, KOORNHOF WAS FORCED TO BACK DOWN AND REITERATE THAT NATIONAL PARTY SPORTS POLICY IN FACT REMAINED UNCHANGED. END SUMMARY.

2. IN AN INTERVIEW APPEARING IN THE AUGUST ISSUE OF PANORAMA, A SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT PUBLICATION INTENDED PRIMARILY FOR OVERSEAS DISTRIBUTION, MINISTER FOR SPORT PIET KOORNHOF WAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THERE IS NO LAW PROHIBITING RACIALLY MIXED TEAMS IN ANY SPORT IN SOUTH AFRICA. KOORNHOF CONTINUED BY EXPLAINING THAT "A CLUB HAS THE RIGHT TO DECIDE AT ALL TIMES WHO SHALL AND WHO SHALL NOT BE ALLOWED TO JOIN THAT CLUB". HE DID, HOWEVER, QUALIFY HIS POSITION WITH THE STATEMENT THAT "THE GOVERNMENT ACCEPTS THAT THE INTEREST OF SOUTH AFRICA AND ALL ITS SPORTING PEOPLES WILL BE SERVED

BEST IF SPORTSMEN AND SPORTSWOMEN OF THE WHITES, BLACKS, AND COLORED PEOPLE AND INDIANS BELONG TO THEIR OWN CLUBS". DESPITE THIS QUALIFICATION, KOORNHOF'S INTERVIEW WAS IMMEDIATELY INTERPRETED AND HAILED BY THE ENGLISH AND MORE LIBERAL AFRIKAANS PRESS AS A GOVERNMENT GO-AHEAD FOR MIXED SPORTS TEAMS.

3. KOORNHOF'S STATEMENT PROVOKED AN IMMEDIATE AND SHARP REACTION FROM CONSERVATIVE NATIONALISTS. ANDRIES TREURNICHT, SPEAKING THE FOLLOWING DAY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA, CAME OUT STRONGLY AGAINST ALL MIXING OF THE RACES, AND MIXED SPORTS TEAMS IN PARTICULAR. HE WAS QUOTED IN THE PRESS AS SAYING: "WE MUST RESIST THOSE WHO, IN THE NAME OF MOVING AWAY FROM DISCRIMINATION, ARE LEADING US INTO INTEGRATION. THEY WANT TO BREAK DOWN THOSE SOCIAL STRUCTURES WHICH ARE NECESSARY FOR A NATION'S IDENTITY. AND BY THOSE SOCIAL STRUCTURES I MEAN GROUP AREAS, SCHOOLS, UNIVERSITIES, TRADE UNIONS, SPORT CLUBS AND THE LIKE. ALARMISTS WORKING FOR INTEGRATION TO AVOID A WAR ARE ASKING THE AFRIKANER TO COMMIT SUICIDE TO AVOID BEING MURDERED." WHEN SPECIFICALLY ASKED TO STATE HIS VIEWS ON KOORNHOF'S STATEMENT OF THE PREVIOUS DAY, HOWEVER, TREURNICHT REPLIED "AS A DEPUTY MINISTER I WOULD NOT LIKE TO COMMENT ON THE STATEMENT OF A MINISTER".

4. THE KOORNHOF-TREURNICHT CLASH QUICKLY SPREAD TO OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE PARTY. CONNIE MULDER PROMPTLY STEPPED IN TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SUPPORT THE CONSERVATIVE SIDE WITH A STATEMENT THAT "ANYONE WHO PROPAGATES MIXED MEMBERSHIP OF SPORTS CLUBS IS NOT ACTING ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL PARTY POLICY LAID DOWN AT THE TRANSVAAL CONGRESS LAST YEAR". AFRIKAANS PRESS COMMENT, ON THE OTHER HAND, TENDED TO SUPPORT KOORNHOF. DIE TRANSVALER NOATED THAT KOORNHOF HAD NOT COME OUT IN FAVOR OF MIXED CLUBS, BUT ONLY SAID THAT THEY WERE NOT ILLEGAL. IT ALSO INDIRECTLY CRITICIZED TREURNICHT BY WARNING THAT DIFFERENCES OF OPINION WITHIN THE PARTY SHOULD NOT BE SIMPLIFIED AND REGARDED AS A CHOICE BETWEEN SEGREGATION AND INTEGRATION. THE SUNDAY NEWS-PAPER RAPPORT WENT FURTHER AND SPECIFICALLY CRITICIZED TREURNICHT, ASKING HOW LONG HE WOULD BE "ALLOWED TO PREACH A BRAND OF NATIONALISM WHICH CONFLICTED WITH THE PRONOUNCEMENTS OF HIS OWN NATIONALIST COLLEAGUES." DIE VADERLAND SUMMARIZED THE DISPUTE WITH AN EDITORIAL PREDICTING THAT THE SPORTS POLICY WOULD CREATE A SERIOUS CLASH AMONG NATIONALISTS.

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R 230825Z AUG 77  
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8527  
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN  
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5. KOORNHOF'S ORIGINAL STATEMENT TO PANORAMA WAS, IN FACT, NO MORE THAN A REITERATION OF THE NATIONAL PARTY SPORTS POLICY PUT FORWARD FOLLOWING LAST YEAR'S NATIONAL PARTY PROVINCIAL CONGRESSES. THE VERLIGS (AFRIKANER "LIBERALS"), LED BY KOORNHOF, WORKED HARD TO PUSH THE POLICY THROUGH THE CONGRESSES, AND SUCCEEDED LARGELY AS A RESULT OF THE POLICY'S AMBIGUITY. IN EFFECT, THE SPORTS POLICY WAS, AND REMAINS, THAT THE GOVERNMENT ENCOURAGES EACH RACIAL GROUP TO HAVE ITS OWN TEAMS AND LEAGUES, BUT DOES NOT ACTUALLY PROHIBIT THE FORMATION OF MIXED LEAGUES AND TEAMS. THE RESULT HAS BEEN THAT SINCE LAST YEAR SOME MULTI-RACIAL TEAMS HAVE BEEN FORMED IN MOST SPORTS, AND SOME SPORTS, SUCH AS CRICKET, HAVE GONE ALMOST ENTIRELY MULTI-RACIAL. THIS HAS OCCURRED WITHOUT THE GOVERNMENT'S OFFICIAL BLESSING, AND DESPITE OFFICIAL HARASSMENT IN SOME INSTANCES. WHILE IT IS NOT ILLEGAL FOR A WHITE PLAYER TO JOIN A BLACK TEAM, FOR EXAMPLE, THE GROUP AREAS ACT MAY PROHIBIT HIM FROM ENTERING A BLACK AREA TO PRACTICE OR PLAY WITH HIS TEAM. THE GOVERNMENT MAY ALSO REQUIRE PLAYERS TO USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SEPARATE LOCKER ROOMS AND TO SOCIALIZE SEPARATELY AFTER A MATCH. SOME PLAYERS HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVELY PREVENTED FROM PLAYING WITH THEIR TEAMS AS A RESULT OF SUCH ACTIONS, ALTHOUGH THIS HAS BEEN THE EXCEPTION RATHER THAN THE RULE.

6. ON AUGUST 18, OBVIOUSLY IN RESPONSE TO MOUNTING PRESSURE FROM THE NATIONAL PARTY, KOORNHOF GAVE ANOTHER SPEECH ON SPORTS POLICY WHICH BACKED OFF CONSIDERABLY FROM HIS EARLIER STATEMENT. KOORNHOF TOLD A STUDENT MEETING AT THE PRETORIA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION THAT "THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN THE SPORTS POLICY OF THE NATIONAL PARTY SINCE LAST YEAR'S CONGRESSES...MIXED TEAMS AT CLUB LEVEL ARE CONTRARY TO GOVERNMENT POLICY. THERE NEED BE NO CONFUSION ABOUT THIS. ANY OTHER INTERPRETATION IS MISTAKEN."

7. COMMENT: THE FACT THAT KOORNHOF'S ORIGINAL STATEMENT ON A MATTER WHICH HAD BASICALLY ALREADY BEEN DECIDED EVOKED SUCH A PROMPT HOSTILE REACTION FROM CONSERVATIVE NATIONALISTS IS ANOTHER INDICATION OF THE DEPTHS OF THE DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE NATIONAL PARTY, WHICH HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY FREQUENT AND PUBLIC IN RECENT MONTHS. ASIDE FROM THEIR IDEOLOGICAL CONTENT THESE DIFFERENCES ALSO REFLECT JOCKEYING FOR POSITION BETWEEN THE RIGHT AND LEFT WINGS OF THE PARTY OVER THE FUTURE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTY AND THE COUNTRY. KOORNHOF'S HASTY RETREAT IN THIS CASE ILLUSTRATES ONCE AGAIN THE INFLUENCE WIELDED BY THE NATIONAL PARTY'S RIGHT WING. IN RECENT MONTHS OTHER VERLICHTE NATIONALISTS HAVE BEEN FORCED TO BACK DOWN FROM FORWARD-LOOKING POSITIONS TAKEN EARLIER, AMONG THEM MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE HENDRIK SCHOEMAN WHO MADE THEN RETREATED FROM A STATEMENT CRITICAL OF THE IMMORALITY AND MIXED MARRIAGES ACTS. IN THE PARTICULAR CASE OF SPORTS POLICY, THE NATIONALIST DILEMMA SPRINGS FROM A DESIRE TO HAVE THEIR CAKE AND EAT IT TOO: TO PROJECT TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MIXED SPORT DOES EXIST IN SOUTH AFRICA, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME ACTIVELY TO DISCOURAGE IT AT HOME.  
BOWDLER

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